

## **India**

### **Facts and Statistics**

**Location:** Southern Asia, bordering Bangladesh 4,053 km, Bhutan 605 km, Burma 1,463 km, China 3,380 km, Nepal 1,690 km, Pakistan 2,912 km

**Capital:** New Delhi

**Climate:** varies from tropical monsoon in south to temperate in north

**Population:** 1,065,070,607 (July 2004 est.)

**Ethnic Make-up:** Indo-Aryan 72%, Dravidian 25%, Mongoloid and other 3% (2000)

**Religions:** Hindu 81.3%, Muslim 12%, Christian 2.3%, Sikh 1.9%, other groups including Buddhist, Jain, Parsi 2.5% (2000)

**Government:** federal republic

### **Languages in India**

The different states of India have different official languages, some of them not recognized by the central government. Some states have more than one official language. Bihar in east India has three official languages - Hindi, Urdu and Bengali - which are all recognized by the central government. But Sikkim, also in east India, has four official languages of which only Nepali is recognized by the central government. Besides the languages officially recognized by central or state governments, there are other languages which don't have this recognition and their speakers are running political struggles to get this recognition. Central government decided that Hindi was to be the official language of India and therefore it also has the status of official language in the states.

Why not learn some useful Hindi phrases?

### **Indian Society & Culture**

#### **Hierarchy**

- . The influences of Hinduism and the tradition of the caste system have created a culture that emphasizes established hierarchical relationships.
- . Indians are always conscious of social order and their status relative to other people, be they family, friends, or strangers.
- . All relationships involve hierarchies. In schools, teachers are called gurus and are viewed as the source of all knowledge. The patriarch, usually the father, is considered the leader of the family. The boss is seen as the source of ultimate responsibility in business. Every relationship has a clear-cut hierarchy that must be observed for the social order to be maintained.

#### **The Role of the Family**

- . People typically define themselves by the groups to which they belong rather than by their status as individuals. Someone is deemed to be affiliated to a specific state, region, city, family, career path, religion, etc.
- . This group orientation stems from the close personal ties Indians maintain with their family, including the extended family.
- . The extended family creates a myriad of interrelationships, rules, and structures. Along with these mutual obligations comes a deep-rooted trust among relatives.

## **Just Can't Say No**

- . Indians do not like to express 'no,' be it verbally or non- verbally.
- . Rather than disappoint you, for example, by saying something isn't available, Indians will offer you the response that they think you want to hear.
- . This behavior should not be considered dishonest. An Indian would be considered terribly rude if he did not attempt to give a person what had been asked.
- . Since they do not like to give negative answers, Indians may give an affirmative answer but be deliberately vague about any specific details. This will require you to look for non-verbal cues, such as a reluctance to commit to an actual time for a meeting or an enthusiastic response.